Defending Matthew 28:19: Evidence-Based Biblical Authority

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Date: June 27, 2025

In the hope of the coming glorious reign of the Lord

I. Introduction

The Problem Statement

Some sincere but mistaken "One True God" believers, inadvertently aligned with Oneness Pentecostal methodology, engage in a dangerous polemic against Matthew 28:19, claiming it is inauthentic while rejecting textual evidence in favor of speculative theories. This represents poor textual criticism that undermines Scripture's authority by removing verses based on theories rather than manuscript evidence. This unfortunately also brings direct conflict with the testimonies of Ellen G. White and pioneer writings that freely and positively employ the text.

For clarity and comprehensive coverage, this defense employs bullet points to address each specific claim systematically while maintaining scholarly precision.

The Claims Made

Anti-Matthew 28:19 arguments typically include the following assertions, which demonstrate the scope and seriousness of this attack on Scripture:

A. Primary Doctrinal Claim:

- "The formula 'in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit' is inherently and necessarily Trinitarian doctrine"
- "Any acceptance of Matthew 28:19 equals acceptance of Trinitarian doctrine"
- "The verse cannot be interpreted without Trinitarian theology"
- "Non-Trinitarian believers must reject the verse to maintain theological consistency"

B. Manuscript and Textual Claims:

- "Matthew 28:19 is missing from old manuscripts like Sinaiticus, Curetonianus and Bobiensis" (false claim - Sinaiticus actually contains Matthew 28:19)
- "No manuscript evidence exists for the traditional reading"
- "The verse was systematically altered by the Catholic Church in the 2nd-3rd centuries"
- "All early manuscripts originally read 'in my name' instead of the Trinitarian formula"
- "Eusebius quoted the 'original' form as 'Go and make disciples in My Name' "

C. Historical and Patristic Claims:

- "Early church fathers prove the verse was changed"
- "The Catholic Church admitted to changing the baptismal formula"

- "Justin Martyr, though using trine formula, didn't find it in his Gospel text"
- "The Didache shows contradictory formulas proving later editing"
- "No early Christian practiced Trinitarian baptism until the 2nd-3rd centuries"

D. Scholarly Authority Claims:

- "All modern scholars agree the verse is interpolated"
- "Critical commentaries universally reject Matthew 28:19's authenticity"
- "The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics proves it's untrustworthy"
- "Catholic Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger admitted its Roman origin"
- "Major Bible translations acknowledge the formula as 'falsely ascribed to Jesus' "

E. Acts Contradiction Claims:

- "Acts proves apostles only baptized 'in Jesus' name"'
- "No Acts passage records the Trinitarian formula being used"
- "The apostles would have obeyed Jesus if He gave the Matthew 28:19 command"
- "Paul's epistles confirm only Jesus-name baptism"
- "Early church practice contradicts Matthew 28:19"

F. The Deceptive "Moderate" Position:

- "We don't reject Matthew 28:19 completely, just question the 'Trinitarian part' "
- "We only reject the 'tail end' that mentions Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"
- "It's like rejecting parts of Ellen White's writings without rejecting all SoP"
- "We accept the verse but not its Trinitarian interpretation"
- "The verse exists but the formula was changed from Jesus' original words"

G. Pioneer and Spirit of Prophecy Claims:

- "Early Adventist Fundamental Principles never used Matthew 28:19 for baptism"
- "Pioneers only baptized in Jesus' name because they knew the verse was corrupted"
- "Ellen White's writings supporting Matthew 28:19 were falsified by the White Estate"
- "H.C. Lacey's letter proves systematic corruption of Ellen White's books"
- "James White and other pioneers avoided the verse because they knew it was inauthentic"
- "Ellen White herself said 'If the Testimonies speak not according to the word of God, reject them' - proving we can reject parts of her writings" (misapplying Testimonies vol. 5, p. 691)

Logical Consequences: The Destructive Path

If These Claims Were Accepted - Biblical Impact:

- Any verse could be removed based on theoretical "original readings"
- Manuscript evidence becomes secondary to scholarly speculation
- Protestant principle of *Sola Scriptura* collapses under critical theory
- Biblical authority yields to human academic consensus
- Textual criticism becomes textual destruction rather than preservation
- Every "difficult" passage faces potential removal through similar methodology (e.g., 2 Corinthians 13:14: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" - also questioned by some due to supposed Trinitarian language)

If These Claims Were Accepted - Spirit of Prophecy Impact:

- Ellen White's reliability crumbles under accusations of systematic falsification
- Any inconvenient Spirit of Prophecy passage can be dismissed as "corrupted"
- The prophetic gift loses authority when subjected to endless critical revision
- Fundamental doctrines become uncertain if foundational texts are unreliable
- The testimonies become worthless if editors can allegedly alter them at will
- God's providence in preserving His messages through His prophet is denied

The Ultimate Result: Following this critical methodology to its logical conclusion leads to complete loss of biblical and prophetic authority, leaving believers with nothing but human opinion and scholarly speculation as their foundation—exactly what Satan desires to accomplish in the last days.

Our Position

1. **Matthew 28:19 belongs in Scripture** based on universal manuscript evidence - no manuscript supports alleged "original" readings
2. **The verse requires no Trinitarian interpretation** when properly understood through biblical word study showing "name" can refer to multiple persons in family/authority relationships
3. **Sound textual criticism** supports biblical preservation over speculation - theories cannot override manuscript testimony
4. **Early Adventist pioneers consistently used Matthew 28:19** without seeing Trinitarian doctrine, demonstrating the verse's compatibility with non-Trinitarian theology
5. **Ellen White's testimonies supporting the verse are authentic** - claims of systematic falsification lack credible evidence and misapply her warnings about critical approaches
6. **The "moderate" position is logically incoherent** - one cannot accept Matthew 28:19 while rejecting its explicit content about Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Methodology

1. **Evidence-based approach** using manuscript data from critical editions and traditional texts
2. **Historical analysis** of patristic claims and counter-claims
3. **Biblical word study** demonstrating non-Trinitarian interpretation using Strong's Concordance
4. **Varied expression of consistent authority** - demonstrating biblical precedent for different formulations of the same divine command
5. **Ellen White testimony** supporting textual authenticity with EGW Writings references
6. **Pioneer theological analysis** examining early Adventist understanding of baptismal formulas, including M.C. Wilcox's exposition showing that "the words are not designed to express an exact form that should always be used, but to express an important fact as to what true discipleship means"^(15)

II. The Textual Evidence: Why Matthew 28:19 is Authentic

Manuscript Support

Universal Greek manuscript support across all text types:

1. **Nestle-Aland 28th edition** - No textual variants listed for Matthew 28:19 (Internet Archive access)
2. **Byzantine Majority Text Family 35** - All major manuscript families support traditional reading (Family 35 edition)
3. **Major early manuscripts contain Matthew 28:19** - Codex Sinaiticus (4th century), Codex Vaticanus (4th century), and Codex Alexandrinus (5th century) all contain the traditional reading
4. **All ancient versions unanimous** - Latin Vulgate, Peshitta Syriac, Coptic texts, Armenian versions support received text
5. **Pre-Nicean citations** confirm early acceptance:
    a. **Didache** (70-100 AD): "baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (7:1)[1]
    b. **Justin Martyr** (150 AD): "For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water" (*First Apology* 61)[2]
    c. **Tertullian** (200 AD): References baptismal formula (*De Baptismo* 13)[3]
6. **Post-Nicean consistency** - no evidence of systematic alteration across manuscript families

Historical Impossibility of Conspiracy

The alleged conspiracy fails logic:

1. **Geographic scope** - manuscripts across diverse regions (Egypt, Syria, Europe, Armenia)
2. **Religious diversity** - Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish communities preserved identical text
3. **Lack of historical record** - no documentation of mass alteration exists
4. **Preservation principle** - God's providence in maintaining His Word (Isaiah 40:8)

Critical questions unanswered:

1. How could thousands of manuscripts be altered without detection?
2. Why would Protestant translators perpetuate Catholic corruption?
3. Where is any historical record of such massive textual manipulation?

Misuse of Patristic Evidence

Eusebius citations misunderstood:

1. **Paraphrase vs. quotation** - ancient writers frequently summarized Scripture for theological emphasis
2. **Context matters** - Eusebius emphasized Christ's authority, not textual variants
3. **After Nicaea** - Eusebius quoted full text when precision was needed
4. **No manuscript evidence** - supports alleged variant readings from patristic summaries

Pattern of ancient citations:

1. Writers often **paraphrased** familiar passages
2. **Theological emphasis** determined citation style
3. **Verbatim quotation** reserved for specific contexts
4. **No manuscript evidence** supports alleged variant readings

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III. Biblical Word Study: Understanding "In the Name of"

Hebrew and Greek Foundation

1. **Hebrew**: *shem* ,) Strong's H8034) - name, authority, reputation, memorial^(4)
2. **Greek**: *onoma* (, Strong's G3686) - name, character, authority, reputation^(5)
3. **Biblical pattern**: Singular "name" frequently refers to multiple persons throughout Scripture

Key Biblical Examples

Family Names in Singular:

1. **Ruth 1:2** - "the name (*shem* H8034) of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion" (singular "name" for two sons)

2. **1 Chronicles 8:38** - "six sons whose name (*shem* H8034) were…" - Hebrew uses singular "name" for multiple sons

Collective Authority:

1. **1 Kings 18:24** - "call on the name (*shem* H8034) of your gods (*elohim* H430)" - singular name, plural gods

2. **Genesis 48:16** - "let my name (*shem* H8034) be named on them, and the name (*shem* H8034) of my fathers Abraham and Isaac" - three patriarchal names forming one family identity

Authority Formulas:

1. **Esther 8:8** - "write in the king's name (*shem* H8034)" - royal authority exercised collectively through multiple officials

2. **Acts 4:10** - "In the name (*onoma* G3686) of Jesus Christ" - Christ's authority acknowledged

3. **Multiple authorities** represented by singular "name" throughout Scripture

New Testament Greek Usage:

1. **Matthew 28:19** - *eis to onoma tou patros kai tou huiou kai tou hagiou pneumatos* (**into** the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit)

Textual Note on *eis* (Strong's G1519):

The Greek preposition *eis* in Matthew 28:19 properly means "**into**" rather than "**in**" - most English translations obscure this distinction. In first-century Hellenistic legal and commercial papyri, *eis to onoma* was a established formula for **property transfers** and banking transactions, indicating transfer of ownership or possession to the named party.^(13) This suggests that baptism represents transfer of ownership/allegiance rather than mere ceremonial action. Greek would typically use *en* for positional "in," making the choice of *eis* textually significant for understanding the relational dynamics involved.

2. **Acts 2:38** - *epi to onomati Iesou Christou* (in the name of Jesus Christ) - same Greek pattern

3. **Colossians 3:17** - *en onomati kuriou Iesou* (in the name of the Lord Jesus) - singular name, multiple relationships

Matthew 28:19 Application

1. **Singular "name" (*onoma* G3686)** follows established biblical pattern

2. **Three persons** sharing family authority structure

3. **No Trinitarian doctrine required** - Father supreme, Son begotten, Spirit as God's presence

4. **Early Adventist understanding** maintains biblical harmony:

a. **Father** - Supreme God, source of all

b. **Son** - God's literal Son, begotten before creation

c. **Holy Spirit** - God's divine presence, the Spirit of God and of Christ (Romans 8:9)

IV. Addressing Spirit of Prophecy Criticisms

Ellen White's Prophetic Warning

Satan's strategy predicted:

1. **Testimonies 5:671-672** - "It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies. Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work. The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded."^(6)
2. **Selected Messages 1:48** - "Satan is constantly pressing in the spurious—to lead away from the truth. The very last deception of Satan will be to make of none effect the testimony of the Spirit of God… Satan will work ingeniously, in different ways and through different agencies, to unsettle the confidence of God's remnant people in the true testimony."^(7)
3. **Pattern fulfilled** - Claims against Ellen White follow predicted strategy of creating doubt

Ellen White's warning:

> "Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief."^(8)

Historical Parallel: The Fanny Bolton Case

Similar claims made (c. 1888-1896):

1. Bolton claimed authorship of *Steps to Christ* and other works
2. Alleged suppression and falsification by White Estate
3. Emerged during personal conflict and financial disputes

Pattern of criticism confirmed:

1. **Balenger letter** (see full context) - similar accusations of textual manipulation
2. **H.C. Lacey correspondence** - following same predicted pattern of creating doubt about inspired writings
3. **Ellen White Estate documentation** - comprehensive refutation with manuscript evidence

How addressed:

1. **Documentary evidence** - original manuscripts in Ellen White's handwriting
2. **Witness testimony** - independent verification of composition methods

3. **Chronological analysis** - contested passages predate conflicts
4. **Pattern recognition** - claims emerged during personal disputes, exactly as Ellen White predicted

The H.C. Lacey Letter Examined

Chronological impossibility based on 1945 correspondence:

1. **Lacey letter to L.E. Froom:** August 1945
2. **Lacey's claimed DA alterations:** 1898
3. **Ellen White's death:** July 16, 1915

Timeline analysis relative to Ellen White's life:

1. ***The Desire of Ages:*** 1898 (17 years before Ellen White's death)
2. ***Spirit of Prophecy* Vol. 2:** 1877 (38 years before her death)
3. **Early manuscripts:** 1850s-1870s (45-65 years before her death)
4. **Lacey's accusations:** 1945 (30 years AFTER Ellen White's death)

Ellen White's consistent testimony on Matthew 28:19:

1. **The Acts of the Apostles, p. 28**: "The disciples were to carry their work forward in Christ's name. Their every word and act was to fasten attention on His name, as possessing that vital power by which sinners may be saved. Their faith was to center in Him who is the source of mercy and power. In His name they were to present their petitions to the Father, and they would receive answer. They were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christ's name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription."^(9)
2. **Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 2, p. 136**: "The prejudice of the Jews was aroused because the disciples of Jesus did not use the EXACT WORDS of John in the rite of baptism. John baptized unto repentance, BUT THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS, ON PROFESSION OF THE FAITH, BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. The teachings of John were in perfect harmony with those of Jesus, yet his disciples became jealous for fear his influence was diminishing. A DISPUTE AROSE BETWEEN THEM AND THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS IN REGARD TO THE 'FORM OF WORDS' PROPER TO USE AT BAPTISM, and finally as to the right of the latter to baptize at all." (2SP 136.3)^(10)
3. **Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, p. 9**: "the ministers of the nineteenth century baptize 'In the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost,' Because the original commission requires it." (Note: This was the introduction written by James White)^(11)
4. **Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 91**: "Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King."^(12)
5. **Never questioned** the verse's authenticity throughout her ministry

6. **Used as foundation** for baptismal practice and Great Commission understanding

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V. Early Adventist Pioneers and Matthew 28:19

Defending Pioneer Understanding

The claims made against early Adventist pioneers regarding Matthew 28:19 represent a fundamental misunderstanding of their theological approach and historical record. These accusations must be answered with documentation and evidence.

Addressing the Pioneer Claims

Claim: "Early Adventist Fundamental Principles never used Matthew 28:19 for baptism"

Response: The Fundamental Principles focused on defining **core doctrinal positions**, not detailed baptismal procedures. The absence of Matthew 28:19 in a doctrinal statement doesn't indicate rejection—it indicates the verse wasn't controversial among early Adventists. They saw no conflict between Matthew 28:19 and their non-Trinitarian theology.

Claim: "Pioneers only baptized in Jesus' name because they knew the verse was corrupted"

Response: This claim lacks historical evidence. Pioneer baptismal practices varied, and there's no documentation showing they avoided Matthew 28:19 due to textual concerns. Ellen White's consistent endorsement of the verse (shown in Section IV) demonstrates official acceptance.

Claim: "James White and other pioneers avoided the verse because they knew it was inauthentic"

Response: James White actually **defended biblical authority** against critical approaches that would remove verses based on speculation. His introduction to Spiritual Gifts vol. 3 explicitly endorses the Matthew 28:19 formula: "the ministers of the nineteenth century baptize 'In the name of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost,' Because the original commission requires it."

Pioneer Theological Consistency

J.N. Andrews' Integration: In his article "Baptism in Water" (Review and Herald, January 22, 1880), Andrews writes: "CHRISTIAN baptism is baptism in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit… Christ commissioned his disciples to baptize in water in his name, but no man can baptize with the Holy Spirit, Christ alone can do this." He demonstrates **harmony** between the full formula and Acts practice while maintaining non-Trinitarian doctrine.^(14)

M.C. Wilcox and E.J. Waggoner's Synthesis: These pioneers explained that Matthew 28:19 gives details fully captured in the name Jesus, quoting Colossians 2:9 that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This shows sophisticated theological integration, not textual rejection. (See Appendix A for full article.)

Ellen White's Confirming Testimony: Her detailed explanation in Spirit of Prophecy vol. 2, p. 136 shows she understood the relationship between different baptismal expressions: "A DISPUTE AROSE BETWEEN THEM AND THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS IN REGARD TO THE 'FORM

OF WORDS' PROPER TO USE AT BAPTISM" - indicating legitimate variation in expression while maintaining essential truth.

The Pioneer Legacy

Early Adventist pioneers demonstrated that:

1. **Biblical authority** takes precedence over speculative theories
2. **Non-Trinitarian theology** can coexist with acceptance of Matthew 28:19
3. **Different expressions** of the same divine truth are biblically valid
4. **Textual criticism** should be based on evidence, not theological preferences

Rather than rejecting Matthew 28:19, pioneers **integrated** it into their theological framework while maintaining their distinctive understanding of God's nature.

Early Adventist Understanding Vindicated

The historical record confirms that early Adventist leaders consistently supported Matthew 28:19:

1. **James White** - defended biblical authority against liberal criticism
2. **Uriah Smith** - defended Scripture's reliability with non-Trinitarian interpretation
3. **J.N. Andrews** - in his article "Baptism in Water" (Review and Herald, January 22, 1880), writes: "CHRISTIAN baptism is baptism in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit… Christ commissioned his disciples to baptize in water in his name," demonstrating harmony between the full formula and Acts practice while maintaining non-Trinitarian doctrine^(14)
4. **M.C. Wilcox and E.J. Waggoner** - explained that Matthew 28:19 gives details fully captured in the name Jesus, quoting Colossians 2:9 that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily"^(15)
5. **Ellen White** - consistently quoted Matthew 28:19 as authentic Scripture

This evidence refutes claims that pioneers avoided or rejected the verse due to textual concerns.

VI. Biblical Harmony and Conclusion

Reconciling Matthew 28:19 with Acts Baptisms

Biblical Precedent for Varied Expression:

John's Baptism Without Record of Words Pronounced (Luke 20:4-6):

Jesus told Pharisees John's baptism was from heaven, yet we have no record of words mentioned and no record of rebaptism of Andrew and Peter and his other disciples who followed Jesus. The rebaptism in Acts 19 is of those who really had not understood John's teachings or listened to them properly, for John taught that Christ would baptize in Spirit. How then had they not heard about the Holy Spirit? We can only conclude they had rushed to baptism in what they had not really learned, serving as a warning to present ministers not to rush people to baptism before good instruction.

Acts Baptisms Without Record of Words Pronounced:

1. **Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:38-39)** - "he baptized him" - no baptismal formula mentioned
2. **Paul's Baptism (Acts 9:18)** - "he arose and was baptized" - no specific formula recorded

The Elisha-Jehu Example - Different Words, Same Authority:

Elisha's Instructions (2 Kings 9:1-3):

- "Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel" (2 Kings 9:3)
- Brief command: "anoint him king over Israel… open the door and flee"

Prophet's Actual Delivery (2 Kings 9:6-10):

- "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel"
- Extended prophetic message including:
  - Detailed judgment against Ahab's house (2 Kings 9:7-9)
  - Specific prophecy about Jezebel's fate (2 Kings 9:10)
  - Much longer delivery than Elisha's original instructions

Key Distinctions:

1. **Divine Title**: Elisha said "Thus saith the LORD" - Prophet delivered "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel"
2. **Authority Scope**: Elisha said "king over Israel" - Prophet delivered "king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel"
3. **Message Length**: Elisha gave brief instructions - Prophet delivered extensive prophetic message
4. **Same Divine Authority**: Both messages carried identical divine authority despite different wording and length

Gospel Writers Demonstrate the Same Pattern

Matthew and Luke's Temptation Accounts Show Varied Expression:

Different Details, Same Event:

1. **Stone vs. Stones**: Matthew 4:3 "stones" (plural) vs. Luke 4:3 "stone" (singular) - same temptation, different specificity
2. **Timing Details**: Luke 4:5 adds "in a moment of time" - additional context, same event
3. **Order Variation**: Matthew and Luke sequence the 2nd/3rd temptations differently - same three temptations, different arrangement

Varied Quotation Styles:

1. **Jesus' Response**: Matthew 4:7 "It is written again" vs. Luke 4:12 "It is said" - same authoritative response, different wording

2. **Same Divine Authority**: Both record Jesus using Scripture against Satan with identical meaning but varied expression

Application: If Matthew and Luke can record the same temptation event with different details, order, and wording while maintaining identical truth, then Matthew's baptismal commission and Acts' summary descriptions can coexist without contradiction.

Pattern Established:

1. **Matthew 28:19** - Christ's commission specifying full authority of God
2. **Acts passages** - historical accounts using summary descriptions
3. **"In Jesus' name"** - by Christ's authority, not precise formula
4. **Biblical precedent** - varied expression of consistent divine authority throughout Scripture
5. **No contradiction** - different purposes (commission vs. implementation), same reality

Conclusion and Call to Action

What our defense upholds:

1. **Scripture's authority** over human speculation and conspiracy theories
2. **Evidence-based criticism** vs. theory-driven textual removal
3. **Biblical interpretation** that honors God's Word through sound hermeneutics
4. **Early Adventist wisdom** in textual and theological matters

Our response to anti-Matthew 28:19 arguments:

1. **Trust manuscript evidence** over unsubstantiated conspiracy theories
2. **Apply consistent standards** to all historical sources
3. **Defend biblical text** while maintaining sound non-Trinitarian interpretation
4. **Follow Scripture's pattern** - "To the law and to the testimony!" (Isaiah 8:20)

The Battle Defined:

This defense demonstrates that the issue is not removing verses but understanding truth. Matthew 28:19 belongs in our Bibles based on universal manuscript evidence. The passage requires no Trinitarian interpretation when understood through biblical patterns where singular "name" encompasses multiple persons in family/authority relationships.

To the candid, rather than engaging in destructive arguments against Scripture's text, we must defend biblical authority while seeking proper interpretation according to the light God has given His people. Amen

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References

1. *Didache* 7:1, in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 257.

2. Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 61, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1885), 183. Full text: "For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water."

3. Tertullian, *De Baptismo* 13, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1885), 676. Full text: "For the law of baptizing has been imposed, and the formula prescribed: 'Go,' He saith, 'teach the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.' "

4. James Strong, *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990), H8034.

5. Ibid., G3686.

6. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 671-672. Online

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8. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 255. Online

9. Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), 28. Online

10. Ellen G. White, *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2 (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1877), 136. Online

11. Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3 (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864), 9. Online

12. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), 91. Online

13. James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930); BDAG (Bauer-Danker-Arndt-Gingrich Greek-English Lexicon); Wilhelm Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903).

14. J.N. Andrews, "Baptism in Water," *Review and Herald*, January 22, 1880. Available online: https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/RH/RH18800122-V55-04.pdf

15. M.C. Wilcox and E.J. Waggoner, "Into the Name," *Signs of the Times*, June 3, 1897. See Appendix A for full text.

Appendix A: "Into the Name" by M.C. Wilcox and E.J. Waggoner

Editorial (Editor: M. C. Wilcox, Assistant Editor: E. J. Waggoner)
Signs of the Times – June 3, 1897

The baptismal formula, if the expression may be so used, found in Matt. 28:19, reads: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." R. V. The words are not designed, however, to express an exact

form that should always be used (see Acts 2:38; 19:5), but to express an important fact as to what true discipleship means.

Of the Father —The Father's name is I AM, Jehovah, and it expresses the character of him who "is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."… To be baptized into his name is to receive of his mercy, his compassion, his forgiveness, his goodness. It is to be made righteous. Jesus came in his Father's name, having the Father's righteousness…

Into the Name of the Son.—The one great sublime fact in the character of the Son of God is that stated in Phil. 2:5-8… To be baptized into his name is to renounce self, to give up all to God, to yield every desire, every ambition, every power and ability, and lay all at his blessed feet, that he may do with them and us as he will. This is consecration. This was the mind of Jesus. This is what must be done to be baptized in his name.

Into the Name of the Holy Ghost.—Everywhere in the Scriptures, the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of God, is the agency of operation, the energy in working, the power of God manifest in the accomplishment of his purpose. It is the mighty life-force working out God's will in harmony with his holy law. It was the creative power in the beginning in creation, brooding over chaos and bringing forth order. Gen. I:2. It is the power which recreates and peoples again the desolate earth. Ps. 104:30. It changes the heart and mind and gives birth to the new man in Christ Jesus. Eze. 36:26, 27; Ps. 51:10-12; John 3:3-5. It is that power in the Word by which we are sanctified, by which we are enabled to fulfill the righteousness of God's law, manifest in the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. In short, it is by that mighty Spirit, that divine life and energy, that the love of God comes into the heart which erstwhile hated God's law, which rested upon our Lord with such fulness, which enabled him to work miracles, which fitted him for his blessed work of "doing good." Rom. 5:5; John 3:34; Matt. 12:28; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38.

It is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth and of Grace, the Comforter, the mighty life-force and fulness of Deity, sent down to the world to save them and keep them.

Baptized into Service.—The baptism of the Spirit, being baptized into the name of the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit (Hagios Pneuma), is a baptism for service. It is the preparation which God gives that we may do his work in his way. But this baptism must be preceded by cleansing from sin and emptying of self…

Into His Name.—And yet while the matter is expressed in detail in Matt. 28:19 (R. V.), "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," it is all included in the name of Jesus Christ; "for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him." Col. 2:9, 10. In him was the Father's name or character, his own character, and the fulness of the Spirit. Therefore when we read that the apostles baptized in his name, they carried out our Lord's injunction. Acts 19:5. The Spirit of God is his representative here, his life given to his children to fit them for service. Those who truly receive Christ will receive his Spirit also.